

Amendment to Claims:

1. (cancelled)

C 2. (currently amended) A utility lighter having a lighter housing, a lighting rod projecting from the lighter housing, a fuel tank, a valve for releasing fuel from said tank, a gas tube connected to the valve and extending through the lighting rod, an ignition unit for generating a spark, and a safety mechanism comprising:

a trigger mounted in said lighter housing capable of being engaged by a user;

a locking lever having a surface with more than one elevation, said locking lever mounted within said housing to project toward said trigger, said locking lever biased from beneath by an arm spring and [in a position] capable of engaging a portion of said trigger to prevent said trigger from sliding a sufficient distance to engage said ignition unit;

a safety button secured to said housing and capable of moving in a substantially parallel but opposite direction to said trigger;

said safety button capable of manipulation by a user to permit said safety button to open said valve to release fuel while said safety button simultaneously moves along said surface of said locking lever thereby causing said locking lever to move out of interference with said trigger permitting said activation

of said ignition unit by said trigger to ignite the fuel being released from said valve.

C 3. (currently amended) A utility lighter comprising a lighter housing, a lighting rod projecting from the lighter housing, a fuel tank, a valve for releasing fuel from said tank, a gas tube connected to the valve and extending through the lighting rod, an ignition unit for generating a spark, and a safety mechanism comprising:

10 a trigger mounted in said lighter housing capable of sliding toward said ignition unit;

a locking lever having a surface with at least a first elevation and a second elevation, said locking lever biased from beneath by an arm spring and positioned within said lighter housing so as to be capable of engaging a stopper tab to prevent said trigger from sliding a sufficient distance to engage said ignition unit; and,

20 a safety button slidably mounted on said housing and capable of moving in a substantially parallel but opposite direction to said trigger, said safety button capable of engaging said second elevation of said locking lever to depress said locking lever out of alignment with said stopper tab thereby permitting simultaneous activation of said ignition unit and release of fuel from said valve.